

been nominated for inclusion in Oregon's Heritage Tree Program.

Monmouth is home to the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training which provides training facilities for both local and state law enforcement officers along with the Oregon Military Academy. The partnerships forged between the town and these institutions shows the dedication of the citizens to not just a safe community, but safe communities across Oregon and the nation.

Beautiful parks in Monmouth are large enough for city-wide festivals such as the annual Western Days Fourth of July celebration—which draw 10,000 visitors annually for the largest and longest patriotic festival in Oregon, yet intimate enough for families to gather and enjoy a day of recreation. Family-friendly activities are available year-round, from active sports programs to dance recitals to high school plays where the whole town comes out to show their support.

And so tomorrow, on this town's 150th birthday, I join the residents of Monmouth, Oregon, in celebrating the wonderful community that they have created.

APRIL 18, 2006 LETTER TO
PRESIDENT BUSH

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, On April 18, 2006, I sent the following letter to President Bush regarding the United States' use of Iranian anti-government insurgent groups in fomenting opposition and supporting military operations in Iran:

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Last week I wrote to you regarding reports that U.S. troops are conducting military operations in Iran.

There are also reports, however, that the U.S. is fomenting opposition and supporting military operations in Iran among insurgent groups and Iranian ethnic minority groups, some of whom are operating from Iraq.

The Party for a Free Life in Kurdistan (PEJAK) is one such group. PEJAK is based in the Kurdish region of Iraq, a few miles from the Iranian border, and has staged attacks across the border in Iran since 2004 on behalf of Iranian Kurdish interests, according to an April 3, 2006 article in the Washington Times. PEJAK claimed to kill twenty-four Iranian soldiers in three raids against army bases in March. Iran's official news agency also reported that three Republican Guard soldiers were killed in a gun battle near the Iraqi border in late March. Iran has denounced PEJAK as a terrorist group and has accused the U.S. of funding PEJAK. According to an April 15, 2006 article in the Economist, Iranians and Turks both believe that the U.S. is supporting PEJAK. It is hard to believe that PEJAK is operating successfully from Iraq without U.S. knowledge, support and coordination.

The Mujahedin e-Khalq (MEK), an Iranian anti-government group which has been listed as a "terrorist group" by the State Department since 1997, is another anti-government group that has received U.S. support. An article by Jim Lobe published on Antiwar.com on February 11, 2005 claims that Pentagon civilians and Vice President Cheney's office

are among those in the U.S. government who support the MEK. His article further describes how according to Philip Giraldi, a former CIA official and a source in an article about this subject in the American Conservative magazine, U.S. Special Forces have been directing members of the MEK in carrying out reconnaissance and intelligence collection in Iran from bases in Afghanistan and Balochistan, Pakistan since the summer of 2004.

Seymour Hersh's April 10, 2006 article in the New Yorker also confirms that the U.S. troops are establishing contact with anti-government ethnic-minority groups in Iran. According to a government consultant with close ties to civilians in the Pentagon, American combat troops now operating in Iran are "working with minority groups in Iran, including the Azeris, in the north, the Baluchis, in the southeast, and the Kurds, in the northeast." The consultant further says, "The troops are studying the terrain and giving away walking-around money to ethnic tribes, and recruiting scouts from local tribes and shepherds."

U.S. support for insurgent activity in Iran is not tolerable. You have claimed numerous times that the object of the so-called "War on Terror" is to target lawless insurgent groups.

Previously I asked you to immediately report to Congress on the extent of U.S. military operations currently in Iran. Now, in light of the evidence described above, I urge you to report to Congress on U.S. support for military operations in Iran by anti-Iranian insurgent groups.

It is a great breach of public trust to set this country on another path of war while keeping the Congress and the American people in the dark. I am demanding that you respond.

Sincerely,

DENNIS J. KUCINICH,

Ranking Democrat, Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations.

14TH ANNUAL "STAMP OUT HUNGER FOOD DRIVE" FEEDS HUNGRY, RAISES PUBLIC AWARENESS OF PROBLEM

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in praise of the 14th annual letter carriers food drive, "A Family Affair", which will occur on May 13th 2006. This is the Nation's largest one-day food drive. Last year the food drive raised 750,000 lbs of food and the letter carriers have set an even bigger goal this year. For the 14th year, they would like to raise 1,000,000 lbs of food. 60 percent of the food raised goes to children.

The "Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive" was organized in 1993 by postal employees, members of the National Association of Letter Carriers and rural carriers to collect food to raise public awareness and combat hunger. Since its inception, over 658 million pounds of food has been collected in more than 10,000 cities and towns across America and delivered to food banks by letter carriers and other Postal Service employees. Their commitment to feeding America's hungry is as unceasing as their

other commitments extolled in the Postal Service's unofficial motto: "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." In this case, postal service employees have included feeding America's hungry in their "appointed rounds". God bless them for it.

Working in partnership with Campbell Soup Company and America's Second Harvest, as well as local offices of the United Way and the AFL-CIO, the Postal Service's commitment to fighting hunger is admirable.

IN HONOR OF ROBERT JAMES
WIDMER, SR.

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a man who can only be described as truly American, Robert James Widmer, Sr. who passed away on Monday, May 1, 2006, in Newark, Ohio, under the care of hospice.

Mr. Robert James Widmer, Sr., 84, of Granville, Ohio, retired in 1985 after 38 years in sales and management with Lederle Laboratories. Born July 9, 1921, in Toledo, Ohio, to the late Elsie Hollice Pace Rubin and Girard Winfield Widmer, Mr. Widmer attended Toledo University, Columbia University and graduated from Haverford College.

During World War II, Mr. Widmer served in the U.S. Army Air Corps from 1943 to 1946, and achieved the rank of Captain. He was assigned to the 454th Bombardment Group stationed in Italy and was shot down on his 13th mission on April 13, 1944, over Budapest and became a POW in Stalag Luft III. For his dedication and bravery, Mr. Widmer received the following medals for service to his country: two purple hearts with two clusters, Presidential Unit Citation for 454th Bombardment Group, Prisoner of War Medal, WWII Victory Medal, and the European African Middle East Campaign Medal with four battle stars.

Mr. Robert James Widmer, Sr., was a member of the Atlantis Country Club and Atlantis Golf Club, a founder and member of the 454th Bombardment Group, member of the Caterpillar Club, VFW, American Legion, Disabled American Officers, Former Prisoners of War at Stalag Luft III, Ex-Prisoners of War, Licking County SCORE, and a member and Elder of the First Presbyterian Church (USA).

This all-American man is survived by his loving wife Janet Clark Widmer; his daughters, Deborah A. Lewicki, Judith N. Widmer, and Nancy J. Freeman; his son, Robert J. Widmer, Jr. of Argyle, Texas in the 26th Congressional District; and five grandchildren, Aaron and David Lewicki, and Jay, Jocelyn and Jimmy Widmer.

Today, we honor Robert James Widmer, Sr., for his commitment to the safety of his country, his passion for life and the love of his family. He will always be remembered for his kindness and generosity to others. May he continue to serve as a role model for others in the future.